

CCM 2015 Testimony

900 CHAPEL STREET, 9th FLOOR, NEW HAVEN, CT 06510-2807 PHONE (203) 498-3000 FAX (203) 562-6314

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VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

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The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent 156 towns and cities, representing over 95 percent of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

SB 116,	"An Act Increasing Property Tax Exemptions for Disabled Veterans"
SB 523,	"An Act Waiving Interest and Penalties for Delinquent Property Taxes for Certain Members of the Armed Forces"
HB 5231,	"An Act Concerning Property Tax Relief for Certain Veterans"
HB 5331,	"An Act Concerning Eligibility for Veterans' Property Tax Exemptions"
HB 5334,	"An Act Providing Property Tax Relief to Veterans"
HB 5953,	"An Act Expanding the Municipal Option to Provide a Property Tax Exemption for All Veterans"

These proposals all have merit. However, these proposals would also, among other things, impose "de facto mandates" by advocating various "options" that would expand criteria and eligibility for local property tax exemptions – positioning many towns and cities to feel compelled to enact. In a situation such as this, the State seeks to buy good will from a segment of the public by using extremely limited, local property tax dollars.

Good intentions can have unintended consequences – as would be the case with these proposals. The non-partisan Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA) has agreed – and has identified similar proposals, from previous years, as having "potential costs" on towns and cities.¹

CCM urges the Committee to (1) obtain detailed fiscal analyses on the impact these well-intended proposals would have on our communities – particularly on local programs and services, and (2) **hold these proposals until further analyses are conducted.**

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If you have any questions, please contact Bob Labanara, State Relations Manager, CCM at rlabanara@ccm-ct.org or (203) 498-3023.

¹ OFA Fiscal Note No. 557; SB 383, 2013.